



# **Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks**

Region 1  
490 North Meridian Road  
Kalispell, MT 59901

## **Hay Creek Management Plan Decision Notice August 27, 2009**

### **Proposal**

In June 2009, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) purchased a 53-acre property located along Hay Creek in the North Fork Flathead Basin, Montana, from a private landowner using funds provided by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). This purchase is part of a larger program designed to provide long-term fisheries habitat protection through land acquisitions made in accordance with a 2008-2009 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between BPA, MFWP, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

As required of all acquisitions made in accordance with the MOA, BPA holds a restrictive conservation easement on the Hay Creek parcel. The MOA requires MFWP to complete a management plan that describes how MFWP will manage the land, the fish and wildlife habitats, and provide for public access. The Hay Creek Management Plan describes the Hay Creek resources as well as MFWP's proposed management goals and objectives. These goals and objectives are consistent with the conservation easement owned by BPA and the conservation values of the area.

### **Environmental Policy Act Process**

MFWP is required to assess potential impacts of the proposed project to the human and physical environment. In compliance with requirements of the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), a draft environmental assessment (EA) was completed by MFWP and released for public comment on August 3, 2009. Public notices were posted in local newspapers and libraries, and copies of the EA were available at the Region One headquarters in Kalispell and on the MFWP website.

Issues raised during the public comment period on the draft EA are listed in the comment section below. There were no modifications to the draft EA based on public comment, and the draft EA and decision notice serve as the final document.

### **Summary of Issues Addressed in the Environmental Assessment (EA)**

The management plan proposes that the property remain in its natural state for the benefit of fish and wildlife habitat and species. MFWP did not propose changing land use, developing the land, or changing the characteristics of the property; therefore, very few issues were raised as a result. The management plan addressed dealing with any current or future weed infestations and monitoring public use of the parcel to protect resource values.


### **Summary of Public Comments**

The EA was open for comments for a 3-week comment period from August 3 through August 24, 2009. Only one written comment was received via email. The individual who commented was only requesting more clarification on certain planned uses for the parcel. No other comments, suggestions, or objections to the plan were received.

### **Decision**

Through the MEPA process, MFWP found no significant impacts on the human or physical environments associated with this management plan. Therefore, the EA is the appropriate level of analysis, and an environmental impact statement is not required.

Based on the EA and public comment, it is my decision to accept the Hay Creek Management plan as written.



August 27, 2009

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James R. Satterfield Jr., Ph.D.  
Regional Supervisor

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Date